

**MEMORY DEVICE AND METHOD USING POSITIVE GATE
STRESS TO RECOVER OVERERASED CELL**

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of erasing a flash electrically erasable read only memory (EEPROM) device composed of a plurality of memory cells includes pre-programming the plurality of memory cells, applying an erase pulse to the plurality of memory cells followed by an erase verification. The erase verification
5 is followed by soft programming any memory cells having a threshold voltage below a predetermined minimum level and applying a positive gate stress to the plurality of memory cells. The erase method prevents overerasing and provides a tightened threshold voltage distribution.

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